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Record: 1

Title: Alcopop hit alone won't halt binge drinking
Authors: writes Daryl Smeaton
Source: Newcastle Herald, The (includes the Central Coast Herald);
01/05/2008
Abstract: Tax products by their volume of alcohol, writes Daryl Smeaton.
ISSN: 0727-9825
Accession Number: SYD-5JT733R3FK89TLVCKCA
Database: Australia/New Zealand Reference Centre
Edition: Late, Section: News, pg. 9

Alcopop hit alone won't halt binge drinking

OPINION & ANALYSIS

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writes Daryl Smeaton

IT'S refreshing to see continued commitment by the Federal Government to addressing alcohol-related problems.

The adjustment to taxation level of the ready-to-drink (RTD) spirits or "alcopops" announced by Health Minister Nicola Roxon on the weekend is encouraging and, as research suggests, should reduce the excessive consumption of these products.

But it's also important to note that this adjustment in isolation cannot address the kind of change we need to correct Australia's drinking culture across all age groups.

Alcohol tax and pricing can be used as a lever for changing harmful alcohol consumption patterns, but to appropriately address excessive consumption, all alcohol products should be taxed volumetrically or, according to the amount of alcohol contained in the package.

Imposing a consistent tax by volume regime (volumetric tax) across all beverage type is a much fairer system of taxation and will help change the consumption patterns that lead to risky drinking and alcohol-related harm across all age groups.

Though aimed squarely at youth, the RTD taxation adjustment is the tip of the iceberg in addressing this widespread problem.

Without a comprehensive tax review and volumetric structure, the new pricing structures could result in new distortions to an already distorted market (for example, there may now be wine-based RTDs attracting much lower taxation).

Previous reforms to alcohol tax under the GST were flawed because they gave preference to certain types of alcohol being consumed.

The consequences of this lopsided reform can be observed in the Australian Bureau of Statistics' research Apparent Consumption of Alcohol, Australia, 2006-07 (Reissue) released this month, which shows consumption of alcopops rose from 15.3 million

litres in 2005 to 18.1 million litres in 2007 making it the fastest-growing category of all drinks and resulting in Australia having the highest per capita consumption of alcopops in the world, double that of the next biggest consumers Britain and New Zealand.

The Alcohol Education and Rehabilitation (AER) Foundation has developed an economic model that demonstrates that imposing pure volumetric taxation would raise the price of RTDs, low-quality spirits, cask wine and fortified wine as well as full-strength beer, and probably reduce consumption.

Before the 2020 Summit, AER mobilised more than 25 organisations to form the National Alliance Against Alcohol Related Violence to put forward high-level policy solutions that will reduce alcohol-related violence and the country's growing binge-drinking epidemic.

AER strongly supports the commitment from the Government for a holistic approach to a preventive health strategy in tandem with a multifaceted review of the taxation model for liquor. But there are still significant barriers in place, namely the National Competition Policy, which prevents states and territories from adequately regulating alcohol availability.

AER is committed to a national, cohesive reform of alcohol policy and renews the call to the Federal Government to remove alcohol from the National Competition Policy, which would allow and encourage the states and territories to bring about licensing reform, such as reducing the number of liquor outlets and limiting trading hours.

Daryl Smeaton is chief of the Alcohol Education and Rehabilitation Foundation.

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**Record: 1.**

**Title:** Increase drinking age to 21, advises report  
**Authors:** Mark Davis Political Correspondent  
**Source:** Sydney Morning Herald, The; 25/06/2008  
**Abstract:** LABOR senators want federal and state governments to consider increasing the legal drinking age to 21 as part of a wide-ranging package of measures to tackle harmful alcohol use.  
**ISSN:** 0312-6315  
**Accession Number:** SYD-5KLHQRE0NC8FVHDK5YQ  
**Database:** Australia/New Zealand Reference Centre  
**Edition: First, Section: News and Features, pg. 5**

**Increase drinking age to 21, advises report**

**ALCOPOPS**

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Mark Davis Political Correspondent

LABOR senators want federal and state governments to consider increasing the legal drinking age to 21 as part of a wide-ranging package of measures to tackle harmful alcohol use.

A majority report by the Senate's community affairs committee supported the Government's budget tax increase on alcopops - pre-mixed alcoholic beverages - as a first step towards reducing risky drinking behaviour among young people.

But the report said all the evidence suggested higher alcohol taxes needed to be backed up by a comprehensive approach targeting harmful and hazardous use of alcohol by controlling supply as well as reducing demand.

The report, supported by the Labor senators on the cross-party committee, recommended that governments consider measures including:

- * uniform national laws with heavy penalties for people supplying alcohol to teenagers;
- * stricter limits on the number of liquor outlets, their opening hours and the volume of take-away sales allowed;
- * raising the drinking age to 21 in the light of evidence that at this age the brain is more resilient to the adverse effects of alcohol;
- * reducing the allowable alcohol content in ready-to-drink products to 3 per cent.

The Minister for Health, Nicola Roxon, said the tax increase was an important part of the Government's strategy for curbing binge drinking. "We are glad that the committee, having looked at the evidence, agrees that this is an important measure," she said.

Liberal senators wrote a report opposing the excise increase, saying there was no clear evidence it would deter alcohol abuse, but it would impose a \$3.1 billion burden on consumers.

Jobs in the alcohol and hospitality industries would be lost, the report said.

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Record: 1

Title: Grog harm soars in young women
Authors: Jen Kelly
Source: Herald Sun (Melbourne); 10/06/2008
Accession Number: 200806101008321818
Database: Australia/New Zealand Reference Centre

Grog harm soars in young women

Edition: 1 - FIRST
Section: NEWS, pg. 008

THE number of young people needing hospital treatment for alcohol-related harm has soared, especially for women aged 18 to 24.

Victorian research shows a sharp rise in hospital admissions for acute intoxication and alcohol dependence.

The Turning Point Alcohol and Drug Centre analysed the results of several surveys and studies into teen drinking.

The rate of alcohol-caused hospital admissions for 16 to 24-year-olds increased substantially in the past eight years, the report said.

Among women aged 18 to 24, it more than doubled from six to 14.6 hospital admissions per 10,000.

The report calls for higher alcohol taxes and reduced trading hours or fewer drinking premises.

It was written before the Federal Government raised taxes on alcopops and the State Government began a 2am lockout for city pubs and clubs.

Public Health Association of Australia CEO Michael Moore said it was worrying that an increasing proportion of young people were drinking ``until they can't remember what happened''.

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Source: Herald Sun (Melbourne), JUN 10, 2008
Item: 200806101008321818

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Record: 1

Title: Study advocates equal alcohol taxes
Authors: Mark Metherell
Source: Sydney Morning Herald, The; 01/08/2008
Abstract: CASK wine, a drop often favoured by heavy drinkers, would jump in price and the price of alcopops would fall under a tax scheme being recommended to reduce problem drinking.
ISSN: 0312-6315
Accession Number: SYD-5L4HIH0BVQC12AY5C45E
Database: Australia/New Zealand Reference Centre
Edition: First, Section: News and Features, pg. 6

Study advocates equal alcohol taxes

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Mark Metherell

PHOTO: Cheaper by the cask ... the tax on four litres is \$1.89.

CASK wine, a drop often favoured by heavy drinkers, would jump in price and the price of alcopops would fall under a tax scheme being recommended to reduce problem drinking.

In findings that undermine the Government's 70 per cent increase in tax on alcopops, research has shown that taxing drinks according to their alcohol volume would be the most cost-effective approach to combat alcohol harm.

The Government has blamed alcopops for alcohol abuse, particularly by teenage girls. But research commissioned by the publicly funded Alcohol Education and Rehabilitation Foundation finds in favour of moving to the "volumetric" taxation of alcohol to end the mishmash of taxes on beer, wines and spirits.

A four-litre cask of wine now attracts just \$1.89 in tax. That would rise to \$12.12 if all drinks were levied at an equal rate measured by alcohol volume.

Such a change would mean the tax on a 375ml alcopop can would drop from \$1.25 to 47 cents.

Other popular drinks would become more expensive. The tax on schooners of full-strength draught beer, sold in pubs, would rise from 21 cents to 38 cents.

The study, undertaken by researchers at the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre and the University of Queensland, compared the impact of different interventions aimed at reducing heavy drinking and the cost burden of alcohol-caused harm.

After volumetric taxation, it found the most cost-effective interventions included banning alcohol advertising and tighter licensing restrictions on late-opening pubs and clubs.

The executive officer of the foundation, Daryl Smeaton, said the findings provided more evidence of the need to overhaul the alcohol tax system to combat drink-induced harm, conservatively estimated to cost Australia \$15.3 billion a year.

The tax on alcopops has highlighted the variations in alcohol taxes. Mr Smeaton said these were often the result of "sweetheart deals" between industry and government.

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**Record: 1**

**Title:** Youth have easy access to drugs  
**Authors:** Emily Macdonald  
**Source:** Townsville Bulletin; 19/07/2008  
**Accession Number:** 200807191010427847  
**Database:** Australia/New Zealand Reference Centre

**Youth have easy access to drugs**

Section: News, pg. 010

TOWNSVILLE'S Party Safe Forum revealed a number of youth had access to dangerous levels of drugs and alcohol.

Every one of the 20 or more 14 to 23-year-olds said they had either been offered drugs or were in a situation where they had access to them.

The forum was hosted by community organisation Lead On in conjunction with Queensland Police Service to establish the party habits of local youth.

The forum was designed to gain information about the partying habits of today's youth and to gather information and ideas which will ultimately result in a survey which will be sent to local schools, TAFEs and universities.

The results of the anonymous survey will then be given to police and other organisations to help them assist youth.

Lead On manager Amanda Blizzard said while quite a few of the youth said they had never touched alcohol, others reported it played a large part in social activities.

''One of the big things that came out was some of the young people felt the new alcohol taxes were encouraging them to drink more,''  
Ms Blizzard said.

''When they go to parties they buy a whole bottle instead of a six pack of cans and because they've bought a whole bottle they're going to try and drink it.

''They also said an increased number of bottle shops meant it was easier to get more liquor at parties.''

Ms Blizzard said a number of youth confessed to being ignorant of the dangers of binge drinking.

''When we asked them 'do you know how to help your peers if they are in trouble' few of them knew about the dangerous signs of having drunk too much alcohol or having taken a drug,''  
she said.

''It was interesting that they knew the dangers of smoking and felt it was uncool and a no go but with drinking they weren't as aware of the health risks.

''We want to see if we can do a binge drinking campaign and also another to make youth aware of the warning signs.''

The Party Safe Forum was hosted by local youth and the survey is expected to be compiled and distributed to schools within the coming



weeks.

Although the program has been conducted in partnership with the Queensland Police, all surveys will be handled by youth so as to encourage their peers to give honest, anonymous responses.

Lead On is a non-profit community organisation which gives youth a voice.

The Townsville Bulletin supports Lead On with a monthly section called Loop which allows youth to express their ideas.

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**Source:** Townsville Bulletin, JUL 19, 2008

**Item:** 200807191010427847

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**Record: 1**

**Title:** Senators divided on \$3bn alcopop tax  
**Authors:** Christian Kerr  
**Source:** Australian, The; 25/06/2008  
**Accession Number:** 200806257005385451  
**Database:** Australia/New Zealand Reference Centre  
**Senators divided on \$3bn alcopop tax**

Edition: 7 - NSW First  
Section: Local, pg. 005

SENATORS have split on the issue of the Government's \$3billion alcopop tax slug, with a committee examining the measure dividing along party lines.

A report by the Senate Community Affairs Committee, tabled yesterday, supported the excise increase on spirit-based, ready-to-drink beverages, but the Opposition, Greens and Democrats all expressed strong reservations.

In a dissenting report, Liberal senators questioned evidence presented to the committee, warning the measure may prompt unanticipated and negative behavioural changes from alcohol abusers.

Greens Senator Rachel Siewert described the move as ``partial and ad-hoc'', while Australian Democrat Andrew Murray said the Government's alcohol tax policy lacked consistency.

The committee warned of the potential for alcopops and other ready-to-drinks to be substituted for other liquor products. ``Young people also can and do binge drink on beer and wine,'' Senator Murray said, while Coalition senators warned younger drinkers could shift from premixed alcopops to full-strength spirits.

Australian Liquor Stores Association chief executive Terry Mott said the alcopops tax had caused a strong drop in RTD sales -- but that had been offset by increased sales of full-strength bottled spirits and sparkling and sweet wines.

``There's also been an increase in soft drinks,'' he said. ``What this indicates to us is that they're buying full-strength bottled spirits and mixing on the run.''

Mr Mott said this was a ``worrying'' trend, because young people could be mixing drinks much stronger than they were used to.

The committee supported a call for a review of alcohol taxation, noting that the alcohol tax regime will be included in the comprehensive Henry Review of the taxation system now underway.

Coalition Senators recommended that the RTD excise increase be held off until the review has reported and called for ``close examination'' of a volumetric method of alcohol tax or a similar approach that gives low alcohol products a market advantage. The Greens also called for a volumetric alcohol tax, while Senator Murray declared ``all products with the same alcohol level should be taxed at the same rate''.

**Source:** Australian, The, JUN 25, 2008  
**Item:** 200806257005385451

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**Record: 1**

**Title:** Women's drinking binges at new high  
**Authors:** Natasha Wallace Health Reporter  
**Source:** Sydney Morning Herald, The; 10/06/2008  
**Abstract:** THE number of young women hospitalised after binge drinking has doubled in less than a decade, a new study shows.  
**ISSN:** 0312-6315  
**Accession Number:** SYD-5KDROUX0MP46D50R9EP  
**Database:** Australia/New Zealand Reference Centre  
**Edition: First, Section: News and Features, pg. 5**

**Women's drinking binges at new high**

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Natasha Wallace Health Reporter

THE number of young women hospitalised after binge drinking has doubled in less than a decade, a new study shows.

The report, to be published in the Australian And New Zealand Journal Of Public Health today, suggested there was an immediate need for public health interventions such as increased alcohol taxation.

It found the rate of alcohol-induced hospital admissions for Victorian males and females aged between 16 and 24 had increased substantially over eight years.

The sharpest increase was for females aged 18 to 24 where the rate jumped from six people per 10,000 in 1998-99 to 14.6 in 2005-06. About half were diagnosed with acute intoxication.

The report's author, Michael Livingston, said three separate studies cited in his research indicated "a clear increasing trend in alcohol-related harm among young people".

"These trends are deeply concerning, suggesting that increasing numbers of young people are experiencing severe alcohol-related problems such as hospitalisation." He said there had been little or no change in the rates of alcohol-induced hospital admissions for those aged between 12 and 15.

Mr Livingston, a researcher at the Turning Point Alcohol and Drug Centre in Melbourne, suggested increased alcohol taxes and reduced trading hours for liquor outlets as the best methods to reduce alcohol-related harm. However, in terms of the rate of risky drinking among young people generally, the report found no clear trend.

Mr Livingston's analysis of four separate studies of teenage drinking concluded that there was "almost no notable increases in risky drinking", with only one study showing a jump - and only for 2002 to 2003. This might have been due to flaws in the data in that it did not reflect "extreme" levels of drinking.

Michael Moore, chief executive of the Public Health Association of Australia, yesterday

called for a complete ban on alcohol advertising and for drinks with higher alcohol content to attract a higher tax.

The Federal Government announced a \$53.5 million national binge-drinking strategy in March to tackle teenage alcohol abuse.

A Senate inquiry will hear expert evidence tomorrow and Thursday on ready-to-drink alcohol beverages ("alcopops") following concern about youth binge drinking. The Government recently raised tax on "alcopops" by 70 per cent.

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Record: 1

Title: Price controls proposed to curb binge drinking
Section: NEWS--NATIONAL
Authors: VAN, WEL Alex
Source: Press, The; 03/06/2008, pA5
Document Type: Article
Abstract: A wine industry leader is proposing a new pricing approach to tackle binge drinking among young people.
Accession Number: CHP080603A00517381901-BT
Database: Australia/New Zealand Reference Centre
Edition: 2, Section: NEWS--NATIONAL, pg. A5

Price controls proposed to curb binge drinking

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WEL Alex VAN

NEWS

A wine industry leader is proposing a new pricing approach to tackle binge drinking among young people.

New Zealand Winegrowers chairman Stuart Smith said setting a minimum price for a unit of alcohol would be the best way to address excess drinking by youths.

Current measures - increases in alcohol tax and controls on advertising - were "about as effective as putting more comfortable pillows in the ambulance at the bottom of the cliff".

He said that although his idea may run counter to the Commerce Act, there was no reason why the law could not be amended to allow it.

Smith's main criticism was the excise tax - essentially a "sin" tax on activities such as drinking and smoking, which were perceived as bad for health.

The tax was largely borne by producers, not retailers, and did not always end in higher prices acting as a disincentive to customers, as intended by the Government.

Smith cited a particular wine that had remained at a constant retail price for 15 years, despite being subject to annual excise increases.

He said price was the driver of alcohol abuse, and setting a threshold below which the price could not drop would be the most effective way of influencing a change in youths' drinking behaviour.

Alcohol Advisory Council chief executive Gerard Vaughan said it was heartening to see the wine business recognising the relationship between cheap alcohol, availability and harm.

"Too often industry groups say the solution to our country's drinking problem lies with the individual," he said.

Research suggests that 50 per cent of Kiwi 12 to 17-year-olds drink alcohol, and 23% of them are categorised as bingers.

Vaughan said New Zealand had a problem because alcohol was too cheap, too available and there were too many outlets.

"Both supermarkets and bottle stores are cutting prices to attract customers," he said.

Another lobby group fighting abuse, Alcohol Healthwatch, said putting the price of alcohol out of the pocket-money range would make all the difference.

Director Rebecca Williams said "price is probably the best tool we've got but is often the last thing we use".

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CAPTION:

Stuart Smith

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**Source:** Press, The, Jun 03, 2008, pA5

**Item:** CHP080603A00517381901-BT

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**Record: 1**

**Title:** Forget alcopops, we want the hard stuff  
**Authors:** Mark Metherell  
**Source:** Sydney Morning Herald, The; 29/05/2008  
**Abstract:** THE alcopops tax has driven drinkers to the bottle - of full-strength spirits, a liquor industry survey of alcohol sales has found.  
**ISSN:** 0312-6315  
**Accession Number:** SYD-5K7MFKPDFAOIF5FW7JB  
**Database:** Australia/New Zealand Reference Centre  
**Edition: First, Section: News and Features, pg. 3**

**Forget alcopops, we want the hard stuff**

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Mark Metherell

THE alcopops tax has driven drinkers to the bottle - of full-strength spirits, a liquor industry survey of alcohol sales has found.

The 70 per cent excise increase designed to discourage young people from turning into binge drinkers has cut sales of ready-to-drink alcopop products sharply, but fuelled a rise in sales of bottles and hip flasks of the real thing.

The industry says the net result is that sales of alcohol by volume may even have increased - an outcome that would contradict a Treasury forecast.

The Distilled Spirits Industry Council of Australia commissioned Nielsen ScanTrak to conduct a survey, which found that in the fortnight after the tax rise on April 27, sales of alcopops plunged by 38 per cent.

But sales of 700ml bottles of spirits rose by 21 per cent.

The survey did not measure sales of larger bottles of spirits, or lower-taxed beer and wine.

A spokesman for the council, Stephen Riden, said that when these were accounted for, "it is likely that the total volume of alcohol purchases in this period has actually risen".

The finding was "the first hard and unequivocal evidence of the unintended social and health consequences of the Government's RTD take hike", he said.

Experts have called on the Government to impose a higher, uniform tax across all alcohol types to discourage drink-hopping of the kind revealed by the survey.

But the Minister for Health, Nicola Roxon, has refused to consider looking at a uniform alcohol tax, leaving it open to be addressed by her new preventative health taskforce.

Yesterday she hailed the "dramatic decline in sales of alcopops", which she said showed the budget measure was working.

"It's great to see the drop in vodka-based spirits, which we know are targeted at young women," she said.

Almost 20,000 girls 15 and younger had a weekly drinking habit. Hopefully this was the sign of a turnaround, Ms Roxon said.

The explosion in sales of vodka-based spirits before the budget proved how necessary this measure was, she said.

The Nielsen survey indicates the budget increase has had a slightly greater impact on males.

The sales of ready-to-drink products containing Scotch, rum or bourbon fell by 39 per cent while alcopops with vodka, gin or white rum preferred by females fell by 37 per cent.

After the budget, the Treasurer, Wayne Swan, released a document which assumed the alcopops tax would have no overall effect on the consumption of other alcoholic drinks.

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Record: 1

Title: Mixed message on binge drinking
Authors: Jeremy Sammut
Source: Courier Mail, The (Brisbane); 30/04/2008
Accession Number: 200804301024814713
Database: Australia/New Zealand Reference Centre

Mixed message on binge drinking

Edition: 1 - First with the news
Section: Features, pg. 024

The Federal Government has used skewed figures to justify its alcopop tax hike, writes Jeremy Sammut

'From 2001 to 2007 there was no increase in binge drinking by people aged 14 to 19'

FROM midnight on Saturday -- the hour when party people usually begin to emerge -- the Rudd Government raised the excise tax on so-called alcopops by 70 per cent.

To justify the hike, federal Health Minister Nicola Roxon maintained that the Howard government encouraged a rise in teenage binge drinking because it failed to bring the tax on pre-mixed drinks, like Vodka Cruisers, into line with the tax on bottled spirits.

The impact of alcohol taxes on young binge drinkers is a complex question.

Estimates are that prices, per bottle, will increase by up to \$1.30. At worst, spending the same amount will buy between one and two fewer pre-mixed drinks and this is hardly likely to deter those determined to binge.

Price has played little role in the growing popularity of pre-mixed drinks, these so-called lolly waters.

Pre-mixes always have been a more expensive option. It is taste and convenience that has encouraged underage drinkers to switch from the cheaper old-school option, like the hip-flask and a bottle of Coke.

It's highly likely that most binge drinkers simply will pay a bit more to drink what they already prefer, regardless of the cost.

The notion that higher taxes will curb teenage binge drinking is fanciful. Roxon did her best to simplify the subject on weekend television. She argued that the percentage of young girls consuming pre-mixed drinks had increased from 14 to 60 per cent since 2000. Rather than explaining what this really meant -- that the popularity of pre-mixes simply had increased -- Roxon created the impression that this was proof that binge drinking had exploded among teenage women, and that the new tax was justified to stem the bingeing epidemic that had gripped the nation.

The figures the minister quoted certainly sounded impressive. Except that the 2007 National Household Drug Survey found that, since 1991, alcohol consumption patterns for Australians aged 14 years or older remained largely unchanged. That's just for starters.

Look at the 2001, 2004, and 2007 surveys compiled by the Australian

Institute of Health and Welfare, and you also find that between 2001 and 2007 there was no overall increase in high-risk binge drinking by people aged 14 to 19. In fact, the percentage reported as bingeing weekly was 10.7 in 2001 and 2004, before falling to 9.1 in 2007.

The figures for young women are even more damning. In 2001, the percentage of 14 to 19-year-olds bingeing weekly -- five or more drinks on any one occasion -- was 11.8 per cent. In 2004, the figure was 10.5. In 2007, this had fallen to 9.5. Even the figure for 14 to 19-year-old young women bingeing monthly has fallen since 2001 from 21.2 to 18.8. And the number of abstainers has increased from 25 to 29 per cent.

This isn't to say we should not be concerned about those young women who do binge drink. But the ``crisis`` isn't as great as the Health Minister portrayed and it does mean we should suspect the Government's real agenda.

The tax hike on pre-mixed drinks will yield \$500 million for the next four years.

That's a lot of money for a new Federal Government with election promises to keep and which is determined not to administer any harsh budgetary medicine.

The Health Minister herself has promised her cheer squad -- preventive health groups and academics -- that part of the extra revenue will go towards a new national preventive health agency.

But the tax is based on the false premise that the ``little Kimmies`` of Australian suburbia have been out there bingeing their brains out. This is far from the truth.

Dr Jeremy Sammut is a research fellow at The Centre for Independent Studies.

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Source: Courier Mail, The (Brisbane), APR 30, 2008
Item: 200804301024814713

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Title: Blow on drink tax
Source: News of the World; 22/06/2008
Accession Number: 7EH1093310790
Database: Australia/New Zealand Reference Centre

Section: Home news, pg. 7

The crippling cost of the government's war on drinkers is buried in the small print of official documents, the News of the World can reveal.

This means drinkers will have to shell out an extra 19p in tax for a pint of beer. The price of a bottle of wine will jump by 58p and a bottle of spirits will cost an extra Pounds 1.93.

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Record: 1

Title: Fed: Review alcohol taxes to stop binge drinking: AERF

Source: AAP Australian National News Wire; 11/06/2008

Accession Number: 74C1534734804

Database: Australia/New Zealand Reference Centre

Fed: Review alcohol taxes to stop binge drinking: AERF

ALCOPOPS AERF (CANBERRA)

A Senate inquiry's been told a comprehensive review of the alcohol tax system's needed to help control the incidence of binge drinking.

The Alcohol and Rehabilitation Foundation says a uniform tax on all alcohol is needed .. not varying taxes based on how drinks are produced.

Foundation CEO DARYL SMEATON says the government needs to tax alcohol as alcohol .. not as wine .. beer or spirits .. because there's no difference in the harm it can cause.

Mr SMEATON says the government needs to review alcohol tax from a public health perspective.

He says it's an industry that earns 30 billion dollars a year .. and causes more than 15 billion dollars worth of harm .. on conservative estimates.

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Source: AAP Australian National News Wire, Jun 11, 2008

Item: 74C1534734804

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Record: 1

Title: Fed: Review alcohol taxes to stop binge drinking: AERF
Source: AAP Australian National News Wire; 11/06/2008
Accession Number: 74C1534734804
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Fed: Review alcohol taxes to stop binge drinking: AERF

ALCOPOPS AERF (CANBERRA)

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He says it's an industry that earns 30 billion dollars a year .. and causes more than 15 billion dollars worth of harm .. on conservative estimates.

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Source: AAP Australian National News Wire, Jun 11, 2008
Item: 74C1534734804

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Record: 1

Title: Industry 'misled public' over alcopop tax impact

Source: ABC Premium News; 03/08/2008

Accession Number: P6S284057086808

Database: Australia/New Zealand Reference Centre

Industry 'misled public' over alcopop tax impact

The Australian Drug Foundation says the alcohol industry deliberately misled the public over the impact of tax increases on ready-to-drink alcohol products.

The Foundation's chief executive, John Rogerson, says independent survey results show overall alcohol consumption is down by more than 5 per cent compared with the same time last year - not up by 46 per cent as the alcohol industry claimed last week.

But Mr Rogerson does agree that it is not fair to target only ready-to-drink products.

"We need to be looking at all the taxes across all the alcohol products," he said.

"The Henry Commission, I understand, is going to do a total review of the alcohol tax system and clearly that's something that's much-needed and something that's going to have a significant impact in reducing alcohol-related harm."

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Source: ABC Premium News, Aug 03, 2008

Item: P6S284057086808

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Record: 1

Title: Binge drinking part of culture, say 81%
Authors: Heath Gilmore
Source: Sunday Age, The (Melbourne); 06/07/2008
Abstract: A NEW survey shows 81% of people say Australia has a binge drinking culture.
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Accession Number: SYD-5KR5GYPTZYG3EB503YD
Database: Australia/New Zealand Reference Centre
Edition: First, Section: News, pg. 10

Binge drinking part of culture, say 81%

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Heath Gilmore

A NEW survey shows 81% of people say Australia has a binge drinking culture.

Only 15% disagree, and 3% are unsure. The survey was conducted across all ages, both genders and all voting persuasions.

The majority in each group said there was a binge drinking culture in Australia.

The results of today's Taverner poll found that 60% of people believed binge drinking was not the Government's problem, though close to four in 10 felt there was at least some level of responsibility for the Government.

The survey was conducted by telephone last month.

The sample of respondents was created from the latest White Pages directories across NSW, with a total of 602 interviews completed. Only a few people, about 14%, felt that higher alcohol tax was an effective solution.

Others agreed it could go part way.

Excessive drinking is considered by many to be a more endemic social behaviour problem that will exist in Australia regardless of what impositions are placed on the behaviour.

Many also felt it should be better tackled through alternatives such as parental responsibility, school education measures, advertising campaigns and limiting the direct promotion of alcohol.

Other steps supported included lowering alcohol content, changing licensing laws to shorten opening hours, less availability and increasing the legal drinking age.

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**Record: 1**

**Title:** Face-off on alcopop tax  
**Source:** Sunday Times, The (Perth); 18/05/2008  
**Accession Number:** 200805181030220688  
**Database:** Australia/New Zealand Reference Centre

**Face-off on alcopop tax**

Edition: 1 - Street

AUSTRALIA'S savvy Facebook generation has vigorously revolted against the Rudd Government's

alcopops tax.

Nearly 30,000 young Australians -- who largely voted for Kevin Rudd at the election -- have formed the Facebook group The Aussies Against The Alcohol Tax Increase.

''The Government has come up with a cunning plan to stem binge drinking and its associated violence by taxing everyone some more for our beloved beverages,'' the group says.

Other newly formed Facebook groups attacking the tax include:

\* I liked Kevin Rudd Until He Declared War On Binge Drinking, with 682 members.

\* The 70 Per Cent Tax On Pre-mixed drinks In Australia Is Revenue-raising Bullsh--t, with 555 members.

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**Source:** Sunday Times, The (Perth), MAY 18, 2008

**Item:** 200805181030220688

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**Record: 1**

**Title:** Alcopop fight brews  
**Authors:** Melanie Christiansen  
**Source:** Courier Mail, The (Brisbane); 17/05/2008  
**Accession Number:** 200805171012773217  
**Database:** Australia/New Zealand Reference Centre

**Alcopop fight brews**

Edition: 1 - First with the news  
Section: News, pg. 012

Measures to target binge drinking with selected tax hikes have enraged the Senate and alcohol manufacturers, with the humble wine cask also under threat, social affairs reporter Melanie Christiansen writes

ALCOHOL ads on television may be restricted as the Federal Government is forced to negotiate to get its tax hike on alcopops through the Senate.

And even as drinkers swallow higher prices for pre-mixed drinks, campaigners against alcohol abuse have a new target -- cask wine -- which they are hoping to effectively price out of the market.

Debate over alcohol taxes and regulations was thrown open this week with the Coalition's decision to block the planned 70 per cent increase in the excise on ready-to-drink beverages to bring them into line with unmixed spirits.

According to the Coalition, the measure is less an attack on binge drinking and more a ``tax binge'', which treats different forms of alcohol unfairly.

Its decision means the Government must wait for the new Senate in July, when the balance of power will rest with five Greens, Family First's Steve Fielding and anti-pokies campaigner Nick Xenophon.

And they have begun making demands, with Greens leader Bob Brown yesterday writing to Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, demanding a more comprehensive plan to crack down on alcohol abuse and challenging the Government to put an end to misleading liquor advertising.

``It's time the Government looked at alcohol being pushed on youngsters with this absurd idea that it in some way enhances your health or your figure or your ability to be a sporty person,'' Senator Brown wrote.

Senator Fielding also wants alcohol restrictions, with a Family First Bill already before Parliament that would stop alcohol advertising on radio and television before 9pm and force manufacturers to include health warnings on labels.

Seizing on the situation, alcohol abuse campaigners are stepping up their campaign for other measures to tackle excessive drinking, including restricting the number of licensed venues and their opening hours.

The Alcohol Education and Rehabilitation Foundation also is planning to use the Government's review of taxation to demand all drinks be taxed according to how much alcohol they contain.

To back its case, the foundation has released a new guide to alcohol

taxes, which it says shows wine -- and particularly cask wine -- is grossly undertaxed compared to other popular drinks.

According to the guide, the tax on a standard 100ml glass of cask wine is just 4 -- a fraction of the \$1.25 tax now to be levied on a can of pre-mixed spirits -- even though the alcohol strength is more than double.

And the tax on a \$13 cask containing 38 standard glasses of wine is only half that of a \$25 bottle of wine with seven standard glasses.

'This tells us the alcohol taxation system is broke and it needs fixing,' foundation chief executive Daryl Smeaton said. 'The alcohol in beer is the same as the alcohol in wine and the same as the alcohol in spirits. They all potentially cause the same harm and yet there are vastly different rates of tax.'

Under his proposed volumetric tax, Mr Smeaton conceded the price of cask wine could quadruple, putting it 'out of business' and potentially affecting 250,000 tonnes of grape production. But any suggestion of higher wine taxes would provoke a strong reaction from the powerful wine lobby, while spirits manufacturers have also been stirred into action.

The arguments will continue before a senate committee, which is about to begin an inquiry into the Government's proposed tax hike on alcopops.

#### Alcohol Tax Chart

drinks 1.5 1 0.8 1 0.7 0.5 1.6 1.2 0.9 38 1 7 1.8 1.5 0.9 1.5 1.5  
22 1 22 1

size 375ml 375ml 375ml 285ml 285ml 285ml 425ml 425ml 425ml 4 litres  
100ml 750ml 180ml 170ml 60ml 375ml 340ml 700ml 30ml 700ml 30ml

type Stubby Stubby Stubby Pot Pot Pot Schooner Schooner Schooner Cask  
Standard Bottle Restaurant Serve of Portor Pre-mix Alcoholic  
Bottle Shot of Bottle Serve of

Full Mid Light Full Mid Light Full Mid Light ofwine serve of ofwine  
serve sparkling sherry spirits soda of spirits spirits of brandy  
brandy

Strength Strength Strength Strength Strength Strength caskwine ofwine  
wine glass

Alc/Vol 4.9% 3.5% 2.7% 4.9% 3.5% 2.7% 4.9% 3.5% 2.7% 12% 12% 12% 12%  
11.5% 18% 5% 5.5% 40% 40% 40% 40%

Tax/Drink \$0.55 \$0.35 \$0.20 \$0.29 \$0.14 \$0.02 \$0.44 \$0.21 \$0.04 \$1.89  
\$0.04 \$3.63 \$0.93 \$0.82 \$0.14 \$1.25 \$1.25 \$18.67 \$0.80 \$17.43  
\$0.75

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**Source:** Courier Mail, The (Brisbane), MAY 17, 2008  
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**Record: 1**

**Title:** Facebook generation targets alcopop tax  
**Source:** Daily Telegraph, The (Sydney); 17/05/2008  
**Accession Number:** 200805171002389122  
**Database:** Australia/New Zealand Reference Centre

**Facebook generation targets alcopop tax**

Edition: 1 - State  
Section: Local, pg. 002

AUSTRALIA'S savvy Facebook generation have vigorously revolted against the Rudd Government's alcopops tax.

Nearly 30,000 young Australians -- who largely voted for Kevin Rudd at the election -- have formed an online Facebook group called ``The Aussies against the alcohol tax increase'' (AAATI).

``The Government has come up with a cunning plan to stem binge drinking and its associated violence by taxing everyone some more for our beloved beverages,'' the group says. Mr Rudd has been ridiculed by the Opposition that the taxes would not achieve their stated objective of reducing binge-drinking, and instead were a revenue-raising measure.

Other newly formed Facebook groups attacking the tax include:

\* ``I LIKED Kevin Rudd until he declared war on binge drinking'' with 682 members,

\* ``THE 70% tax on pre-mixed drinks in Australia is revenue-raising bullsh..t'' with 555 members, and

\* ``TAX increase on alcohol will not stop teenagers drinking'' with 215 members.

The Rudd Government's legislation to introduce the tax on alcopops has also come under fire from the Greens in the Senate.

Young women said they felt victimised by the alcopop excise and feared it would encourage youths to turn to cheaper alternatives such as drugs.

``You get ecstasy cheaper than some drinks,'' said Chloe Maxwell, 18.

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**Source:** Daily Telegraph, The (Sydney), MAY 17, 2008  
**Item:** 200805171002389122

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**Record: 1**

**Title:** Alcopop anger on Facebook  
**Source:** Daily Telegraph, The (Sydney); 17/05/2008  
**Accession Number:** 200805172007953710  
**Database:** Australia/New Zealand Reference Centre

**Alcopop anger on Facebook**

Edition: 2 - Extended Metro  
Section: Local, pg. 007

AUSTRALIA'S savvy Facebook generation has vigorously revolted against the Rudd Government's alcopops tax.

Nearly 30,000 young Australians -- who largely voted for Kevin Rudd at the election -- have formed an online Facebook group called ``The Aussies against the alcohol tax increase'' (AAATI).

It has accused the Government of ``taxing everyone some more for our beloved beverages''.

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**Source:** Daily Telegraph, The (Sydney), MAY 17, 2008  
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**Record: 1**

**Title:** Jeers for alcohol tax  
**Source:** Sunday Mail (Adelaide); 11/05/2008  
**Accession Number:** 200805111080159638  
**Database:** Australia/New Zealand Reference Centre

**Jeers for alcohol tax**

Edition: 1 - State  
Section: Opinion, pg. 080

THE high \$A won't be the only thing that will cause pain to the wine industry ('`High Dollar Punishing Wine Sales'', 4/5/08). Do you really think the Government's ridiculous tax on alcopops was done to curb binge drinking? Or is it just a precursor to an across-the-board tax hike rip-off for all alcohol? Making Johnnie Walker & Cola cans cost \$7 each is only going to encourage youths to buy a bottle of Scotch for the same price as a 4-pack. So don't be surprised if the Government increases the tax take on wine, beer and spirits while using the excuse the binge drinkers have changed their habits and found cheaper alternatives.

Stephen, Adelaide

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**Source:** Sunday Mail (Adelaide), MAY 11, 2008  
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